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ABSTRACT

This document examines the role of education in cultural development. Culture itself is difficult to define, but involves behavior that is shared, transmitted, imitated, adapted, and altered within a society. Each social group has a cultural identity--that core of concepts, ideas, values, behavior, and purposes by which members of the group identify themselves and distinguish themselves from other groups. Education is the process by which a newborn becomes an integrated member of the community and it is the main agent of transfer of culture through the generations. Education guarantees the continuation of culture. In earlier times, where central governments managed schools, the governments dictated curriculum and the curriculum reflected the culture of the center of power. The norms and values of formal education can strengthen the cultural identity of the learners. Non-formal education may offer an alternative form of teaching and can be used to impart specific skills for employment or social development. Informal education may be even better, as it requires lower expenses while tapping knowledge, skills, and ideas that would otherwise be overlooked. Formal teaching should be supported by informal education, or the official values and skills that the schools teach may come off second best to what pupils learn in informal circuits. (Contains 30 references.) (SG)

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CONTRIBUTION OF EDUCATION TO CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

"Education: the carrier of cultural development"

by

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Contents

1.	What is the contribution of education to cultural development?	1
2.	Culture	1
3.	Sub-cultures	4
4.	Cultural Identity	5
5.	Communication	8
6.	Development and change	12
7.	Education	15
8.	Decentralizing formal education	20
9.	Education and Culture	27
10.	Conclusions	28
	References	30

1. What is the contribution of education to cultural development?

The main theme of the International Conference on Education in Geneva in 1992 is not whether education contributes to cultural development, but rather how education contributes to cultural development. This implies two assumptions. One is that there is something as "culture", that develops, the other is that there is something called "education" that contributes to the development of culture. Here are two concepts about which exist very different opinions and ideas. What is culture and what is education? Somehow the two are inherent to human beings. Because other living beings, apparently, do not need the two for the survival of the species as human beings do. Salmons spawn and die even before the young ones are born. There is no communication between two generations. Yet the young ones behave like the elders. Here mechanisms of nature are at work that secure the continuation of the species. Other animals have to learn, for example hunting, from their parents. Also animals learn from experience. Question is to what extent one can speak of a conscious and planned teaching - learning process. Human beings, once born, will not survive if not raised by their parents for a long time. This is where education comes in.

Then there is that other dimension what is called culture. Something that not only enables human beings to survive but also enables them to influence nature and their chances for survival.

If one wants to give an answer to the question to be posed at the conference, one has to come to an understanding of what is meant by culture, by education and by development.

2. Culture

At present some five billion people live on Earth and their numbers are growing fast. This is a major point of concern from the point of view of human survival, environment and possibly peace.

Another issue of importance is that on the one hand these five billion people appear to be all different, while on the other hand there are many similarities. Not only physically, but also in the way they act and think. It appears that people behave not only according to rules of nature, but also to other rules, based on particular norms and values, while they also have the capacity of creativity, of change. Something that differentiates human beings from plants and animals. This brings us to the concept of culture.

The problem is that there are over a hundred definitions of culture. For a discussion about the effects of education on cultural development, a choice has to be made. The term is often used

to distinguish culture from nature. Herskovitz (1952:625) defined culture 'as the man-made part of the environment, culture is essentially a construct that describes the total body of belief, behaviour, knowledge, sanctions, values and goals that make up the way of life of any people'.[1] In this definition environment refers both to the natural as well as the social environment. In this way culture 'includes all the elements in man's mature endowment that he has acquired from his group by conscious learning or, on a somewhat different level, by a conditioning process - techniques of various kinds, social and other institutions, beliefs, and patterned modes of conduct'. However, Herskovitz points out that there are some 'seeming paradoxes':

1. Culture is universal in man's experience, yet each local or regional manifestation is unique.
2. Culture is stable, yet culture is also dynamic, and manifests continuous and constant change.
3. Culture fills and largely determines the course of our lives, yet rarely intrudes into conscious thought' (Ibid.:18).

Linton (1964:21) defines culture as 'the configuration of learned behaviour and the results of behaviour, the component elements of which are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society'. This definition stresses some other issues (Dubbeldam, 1991).

- The component elements of a culture are shared by a group of people, which determines the identity of the group.
- The elements of culture are transferred from one generation to another.
- Linton's definition refers to learned behaviour. Young ones have to learn in order to become adult human beings.
- The component elements are closely interrelated, they form a closely knit configuration. This implies that changes in one element usually imply changes in other elements of the cultural network.

The definitions presented above contain useful elements, but none covers all aspects of the concept of culture.

For example the aspect of change. History and even today's events show that changes in the natural environment - such as draughts, inundations, diseases (e.g. these days aids), earthquakes - do influence the way human beings behave. Also individuals, because of their capabilities of thought, ideas and creativity, show that they, to some extent, can manipulate

[1] Cf. Kater (1984:20) and Camilleri (1986:8).

their natural environment and change culture. Through planned experimentation and invention people can bring about far-reaching changes in their daily life.

The definitions also ignore that, for human beings, their "universe" is more than life on this world. There is the supranatural sphere, the spiritual environment. The existence of people, and the *raison d'être* of their existence is often anchored in the spiritual world. Many of the social rules and modes of behaviour have in a distant past been determined and ordained by ancestors, spirits or gods. On the one hand the existence of people is protected by the supranatural, on the other the latter can be threatening to people who neglect their obligations. In many societies this plays a crucial role in socio-political issues. Those in power may enforce their mundane rules by calling upon the rules set by a supernatural authority. If, at all, the people could do something against the former, in the case of the latter they are even manoeuvred in a position that they will not even think of disobeying the supranatural commandments.

It is not just a question of the natural, inherited capacity to survive and multiply the species. There is a specific added value, namely the knowledge, skills, attitudes, norms, ideas and creativity that determine the behaviour towards other people, nature and the supranatural and that may lead to development in the sense of improvement of daily life.

Individuals grow into what they are partly through hereditary factors, but this is not enough to survive. As important is that people keep on learning, through the transfer of knowledge and ideas by other members of society, be it older people, peers or younger ones (Dubbeldam, 1990, p.25).

In preparation of the conference a questionnaire has been administered to the member countries.[2] For the purpose of this questionnaire, the following concept on the nature of culture proposed by the World Conference on Cultural Policies (Mexico, 1982) was considered to be useful: "The Conference agrees: that in its widest sense, culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs; that it is culture that gives man the ability to reflect upon himself. It is culture that makes us specifically human, rational beings, endowed with a critical judgement and a sense of moral commitment. It is through culture that we discern values and make choices. It is through culture that man expresses himself, becomes aware of himself, recognizes his

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[2] Survey in preparation for the forty-third session of the international conference on education on the theme: the contribution of education to cultural development. Geneva, 14-19 September 1992, ED/BIE/CONFINTED/43/Q/91, Geneva, 12 June 1991.

incompleteness, questions his own achievements, seeks untiringly for new meanings and creates works through which he transcends his limitations."

This definition sums up a series of features of what culture is, rather than defining the essentials. Furthermore one may questions, for example, the critical judgement or the sense of moral commitment of many human beings. Not all people are aware of themselves nor recognize their incompleteness or question their own achievements, and seek untiringly for new meanings. In some cultures such forms of behaviour are encouraged, in other they are not. The longitudinal dimension, the elements of sharing and transmission are missing. Especially the latter seems to be important in a definition of culture used in relation with education. The first sentence hints more to what can be named cultural identity than to culture.

Considering the various characteristics and aspects mentioned in the definitions presented above, the following definition of culture is suggested as a useful instrument for the present paper:

Culture can be defined as *the configuration of ideas and learned behaviour and the results of behaviour whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society, in a continuous process of imitation and intended transfer of knowledge about society, nature and the supranatural, as well as through adaptations and alterations as a result of society's changing environment and its members creativity.*

3. Sub-cultures

One of the problems with culture is that even though one might speak about the culture of a particular society, it appears at a closer look, that not all elements of a particular culture are shared by all members. For example, one does speak of a Dutch culture. Yet there is a noticeable difference between farmers in the North of the country and the football supporters in The Hague: in the way they behave, dress or speak. They all speak Dutch, but they use different words, idiom and grammar. Their ideas about social values differ widely. Apparently there are within society various sub-cultures. What makes it even more complicated is that individuals do belong to different sub-cultures, people grouped together around a particular profession, religion, age-group, interest, political views and others. Each of these social groups has its own particular sub-culture. The rationale for the existence of each of these and the purpose for being together is obviously different. In each of these social groupings a particular attitude and behaviour is expected of the participants. This is visible in, for example, the way they dress, they way they treat each other and in the language they use. A

person behaves differently in his or her varying social roles, in the work situation, in religious meetings, in the family or during leisure time.

Each person belongs to many sub-cultures, that sometimes show contrasting or even conflicting behaviour, norms and values (Dubbeldam, 1991, p.3 and p.8). Sometimes individuals are free to join a particular sub-cultural group, such as in sports, political groups or some religious societies. On the other hand people may not easily enter a particular sub-group or can never do so. It is often difficult for men to become a member of women societies or even act and behave as a woman; it is quite impossible to change membership of one's age-group; in some societies exists a strict separation between sub-cultural groups based on factors such as religion, caste, race, sex, wealth or profession. Often one finds a combination of some of these.

Each of these sub-cultures has its own means of transfer of culture. This means that there is in a particular society a multitude of sub-cultural learning circuits, usually informal, but sometimes also non-formal.

4. Cultural Identity

All (sub)cultures have a core of concepts, ideas, values, behaviour and purposes with which the members identify themselves and through which they distinguish themselves from non-members. Belonging to a group strengthens the members' feelings of security. This core could be named the *cultural identity* of a social group.

Differences in physical appearance or habitat may make people classify "others" as different. Cultural differences or similarities may aggravate or mitigate such differences. In general, one could say, the unknown is dangerous. Individuals find security, within their familiar cultural setting, since they are culturally at par with the other people they meet. Strangers, who behave differently, are a potential threat as long as one does not know more about them and does not understand them.

As with the concept of culture there are difficulties with the definition of cultural identity. Often one finds descriptions serving a specific purpose rather than definitions. For example: 'The cultural identity of a people, a nation, is the right inherent in that people or that nation itself to resist and oppose all the assimilationist pressures and levelling forces of the contemporary world.', or 'Cultural identity is the highest expression of the fundamental equality of nations and groups coexisting within one nation', or 'Cultural identity recognizes the right to differ, the right of authenticity', or 'Cultural identity is synonymous with freedom, with equality' (Kane, 1982).

In the Webster dictionary, *identity* is explained as a state of absolute sameness. *Personal identity* is described as 'being the same person from the commencement to the end of life while the matter of the body, the dispositions, habits, thoughts, etc. are continually changing'. This idea holds also for cultures. For example, the German culture of today differs from its predecessor in the 14th or 15th century. Yet for both the early period and for today we speak of a German culture, while the historical elements play an important role in the cultural identity of today's people. We know that there are many differences, yet we see enough similarities to use the same labels. There exists a continuity between the past and the present as well as between people living at different times within the same geographical boundaries.

This is more difficult for immigrant populations that have occupied the territory of another cultural group that has been driven out of the area or has become extinct. In this case the people have to refer to ancestors who lived in a much more recent past. For example there is a difference in this respect between the United States and India. But cultural identity may as well be a construct. For example, when a group with a strong ideology comes into power, they may change the references to earlier periods, to particular commonalities, to specific cultural heroes to suit their ideological purposes.[3]

In the process of identification a person may assimilate an aspect, a property or an attribute belonging to another person, and, using it as a model, change himself accordingly. This may happen in the case where people who feel themselves to be in an inferior position to more powerful people in society.[4] But this phenomenon, found in a socio-political context of domination, may also show cases where the dominating party copies behaviour from the dominated group. Assimilating cultural elements of other groups often has a socio-political reason.

At the subcultural level identification is used by commercial firms promoting music, softdrinks and other goods or types of behaviour to sell their products.

A group's cultural identity is not only formed by the people of a particular culture themselves. It often is, at least partly, formed by outsiders, often on the basis of visible behavioural features. Not always people are aware of the component elements of their identity. They may be aware of and believe in some elements, but be unaware of others, that exist in the views of

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[3] For example, during the second world war when the Netherlands were occupied by Germany, much reference was made by the occupying power to the old times where the germanic roots for both Dutch and Germans could be found and to the heroes of the glorious Dutch maritime period, many of which fought, with success, against the British (see for example the postal stamps of that period).

[4] Cf. in this respect the publication of a group study of the Ministry of Education in Guinea Bissau (1982, Educafrica no.8).

outsiders. Outsiders observing a society are likely to name a different set of elements to describe that society's or its members' cultural identity. Foreigners may tend to identify the Dutch by wooden shoes, windmills, tulips, dikes and cheese, including some items that are almost out of use in the country. Many Dutch dislike that image; jet in promoting business abroad advertisers use these elements to draw their clients' attention.

The concept of Cultural Identity has a meaning at two levels, the individual and societal. These are partly similar (in nature), partly different (in scale and function) and, finally, reciprocal.

At the individual level, *cultural identity is the psychological recognition by an individual of sharing a set of fundamental behavioural elements with a number of other people, with whom a close relatedness is revealed, by which the rightful and appropriate position of the individual in human society is confirmed.*

Similarly, at the societal level, be it macro or micro, we find that the *cultural identity of a particular society is the aggregate of specific behavioural elements which are recognized as representing the characteristics of the fundamental behavioural pattern of the members of that society, thus confirming the rightful and appropriate existence of that society and its members.*

When the elements forming the cultural identity of a particular group of people have an adequate positive unifying value for the members of the society (or group) concerned, one may classify this as positive. However, the situation is different when elements are fostered, sometimes as it were artificially, as a distinction from other people, as something superior, better than that which identifies the others. Cultural identity then becomes, figuratively speaking, an egocentric 'I entity', different and better than others. This implies a potential danger for relations between communities when some groups are exploited or manipulated politically by groups in power, whether ideological, religious or economic (Dubbeldam, 1984, p.16).

It is interesting to note that whenever references are made by a social group to its cultural identity, these relate usually to the past, sometimes to the present, but rarely to the (even nearby) future. Yet at least some people must have a vision on the future of their group.

The terminology used to indicate particular characteristics can easily be misleading. A study was made comparing the Thai and the American cultures (Fieg, 1989). In the study a number of characteristics was identified in which the one culture contrasted with the other. Also certain cultural features that the two had in common were described. The study shows that it

is very risky to stick labels on culture elements or aspects. For example, even though both cultures could be named individualistic, there still was a great difference. Individualism was generally played down by Thai culture in favour of group harmony, including especially close family ties and smooth interpersonal relations (op.cit.32/33). The same word, therefore does not cover the same phenomena in the two societies.

5. Communication

Expression

People have many ways to express their feelings and ways to communicate with each other. Through their creativity and particular skills they can mould all types of matter from flintstones to atoms. Through wood, paint, glass, silk, gold and many other materials people have aired their feelings and they have created many objects useful or pleasant to themselves or others. They have developed a variety of means of communication by which they can adequately express their ideas, feelings, norms and values, such as physical signs, sound, language, the script and graphics. These are used in mimics, dancing, theatre, story telling, literature, radio, television and computerized communication.

Physical signs

People are social beings, who have many ways and means to communicate with each other. Physical expressions can indicate joy, fear, approval and other feelings or messages. Through movements of the hands we can express our feelings. Yet, the ways in which people use their hands differ, for example in the way they greet each other or how one offers something to another person. Through the movements of the body people can pass on messages to each other. This is extended to the way people dress themselves, colour their skin or make up their hair. Colours of dresses have particular meanings: some dresses are appropriate only in specific situations. Some types of haircut give information about the social status of the persons or about their identification with certain sub-cultural groups. Dress may be an indication of conservatism or modernity, of status, of joy or sorrow, of conformism with or revolt against the current social order.

More powerful is the use of sounds and especially the capacity of speech. A hissing sound to attract someone's attention is accepted in some cultures, in other it may be an insult.

Language

Through the use of language people can express their ideas and communicate with other

people of their community. Through language people can transfer their knowledge, values and ideas to others and by doing so their culture.

Languages reflect the culture of a particular community. In the sense, for example, that where a particular food-crop is dominant in society, the people will distinguish many variations, identifying them with different words. Other societies may just have one word for the type of crop. The Dutch have one word for sweet potatoes, some societies have a few dozen words for varieties. The Dutch and English languages have one word for rice, but others, such as the Bahasa Indonesia or Kiswahili, have different words for rice on the field, for uncooked and for boiled rice. There are great differences in the variety of words for family relations, reflecting different behaviour towards particular relatives. Words do not have the same value in various languages, which becomes apparent when on talks about concepts like 'authority', or 'democracy'. The value a word as 'teacher' has in different languages differs widely in terms of respect and authority. But also technological words and terminology used in natural science (such as 'power') do raise misunderstandings in learning processes. As cultures change, the language will adjust to the new situation, some new words are introduced, others become obsolete or disappear altogether. Sometimes changes are fast, but in other cases it takes quite a while and effort for words and linguistic concepts to be internalized.

All individuals are socialized in one language, the one used by their parents, relatives and community. With widening contacts within communities, people get into contact with others who speak a different language. Where particular cultures or sub-cultures are dominating, in terms of numbers or power, it becomes a necessity for the individual to learn one or more other languages. This can be done through informal contacts, but it is usually an essential aspect of formal education. It can be one of the reasons why children are prevented from participating in school education because they do not understand what is taught. But if they manage to speak and understand the second language, there still is the question whether they really can internalize the cultural values that are inherent to language. And if they do, to what extent can this lead to a position where the individual has to balance between two cultures or has to jump from the one to the other as a particular situation demands?

Oral communication

Oral communication is the oldest medium human beings have. It is the means of daily communication within the local community and with the widening circles of communication in the world it plays a role in the contacts with outsiders. It is the most important instrument in the socialization process. But in addition to this it is the instrument par excellence for the transfer of history, values and norms. In almost all societies story-telling plays an important

role. It has an element of entertainment, a social activity. Between the storyteller and the audience is a feeling of togetherness. It often has an educational function, since the audience is informed about the nature of things, the mythological past, religion, history or the daily life. In "oral" cultures one finds a richness of stories, that are told over and again, and memorized, while their messages are internalized. The message and the pattern of the story is usually pre-determined. Yet in many cases improvisations on fixed patterns may be used to comment on social developments, such as the wayang performances in Indonesia. People will have an open ear for a message when they can recognize its framework and its meaning, and can identify themselves with the problem sketched or with one of the persons in the story. Unless the message fits in the cultural framework of ideas and experiences of the receiver, it will be lost. Speech, however, has its limitations in reach. One can communicate directly only with people who are physically present. One may, often unaware, address people in different places or at different times, but one depends in that case on the accuracy in which the story is retold by a sequence of intermediaries.

New media

At present the traditionally known "oral culture" has partly been merged with or replaced by other media, for example the written word, the radio, television and computer technology. A new mix of communication techniques is developing.

The gradual development of various techniques and the modern technology helped people to widen their capacities to communicate with others. The development of the script together with the materials to be used, such as paper, and to write with, such as pencils up to typewriters and computers, and reproduction techniques have been of revolutionary importance to mankind. Later instruments as the radio, the television, the telephone, telex and telefax have widened the possibilities and range of communication. All these together did not only enable people to send messages to people at distant places, but also to record ideas and information so that they can be preserved and be transmitted accurately.

The various means of communication strengthen each other. Movements can effectively support words. Radio transmissions can be used complementary to and in support of written information. They may, however, also replace each other. For example, someone who may call somebody else by telephone, does not have to write a letter. Who has a radio or television can keep himself informed about current events without having to read a newspaper. Extension officers, school teachers, professors use pictorial information for passing on a message to their audience.

This has its effect on the use of particular means of communication, such as on the use and

need for literacy. For many people oral communication plus audio-visual media fulfil their needs for information. For that reason some people may not feel the need for literacy skills. In others where people were taught to read and write, these skills may lapse for lack of exercise, leading to an increased number of new illiterates. The use of literacy depends very much on the cultural context.

Though there is a significant increase in the potentialities of communication there are serious problems.

- In the internationalization of communication the interpretation of specific codes, signs and words used is becoming more and more essential. This implies that people, whether sending or receiving messages through the new media, have to learn the meaning of the new codes, signs and words, of the 'language and symbols of communication'.
- The availability of the various media in the world, and especially in the developing countries, differs widely. In some countries the daily circulation of newspapers is less than 1 per 1,000 inhabitants. The number of radiosets and t.v.sets differs much in the various countries. The density of t.v. sets is low in some sub-Saharan countries, and much higher in other countries in the same region. This raises questions as who are the owners of such sets? Possibly only the more well-to-do part of the population? There is still a lack of realistic data on the availability and the use of the various media in developing countries.
- The accessibility of information through the various media is also limited because in many instances the content is curbed by authorities, for political, ideological or religious reasons.[5] Many newsagencies, T.V.- and radio stations, printing press and other agencies that provide information to the audience are owned and controlled (or manipulated) by governments or political, ideological and religious organisations. International press agencies are often run commercially, but they also, according to their critics do have a particular political and cultural bias. Finally the selection of information is done by editors, who have their own cultural and personal criteria and interests. It seems that such barriers for a free flow of information can only be solved in situations where the people, the consumers of education, can choose from various sources and compare the products, like they do with the products in the market place.

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[5] Cf. Syed Altaf Gauhar (1981, p.72): "In the reconstruction of the system of education in the Muslim World, it is the Muslim mind which should determine not only its methods of teaching and training, its courses of study and procedures of evaluation, but also the policy and operations of the mass media including newspapers, news agencies, radio broadcasts, television programmes, films and other audio-visual facilities."

- Related with the former issue is the fact that individuals attach specific weight to information that is handed to them by persons in authority. This starts with information from the parents and relatives during the socialization process, but continues through life, such as what the teacher tells in school, what is written on paper, what leaders in society tell. Not automatically individuals check such information with other sources, even if they are in the position to do so, because even the intent to check information is often not acceptable socially or politically. For example questioning a teacher is not acceptable in many cultures, which has its influence on classroom behaviour and teaching methods. Similarly many medical doctors do not appreciate their patients to seek for a "second opinion". Often children are discouraged to ask questions. They are supposed to listen. When such habits are internalized learners may have difficulties with the curiosity needed in problem solving techniques and natural sciences.

6. Development and change

From the point of view that culture is transferred from one generation to another, and that all elements of a culture are interrelated, one may expect that this is a conservative process. And, in fact, at least until recently, the socialization process and the following education tended to be conservative. Parents and other members of the community taught the youngsters the ideas, norms, behaviour, attitudes and particular skills as these were transferred to themselves. Yet all cultures do change, sometimes slowly and gradually, and in other cases violently and abruptly. Historical and anthropological history show a full scala of variations between these two extremes.

Cultures change, or develop[6], as a result of various causes:

- There may be alterations in the natural environment, forcing people to react. Changing particular forms of behaviour in response to the new situation may imply wider cultural change, because the cultural universe has to find a new harmony. One finds such a situation in cases where the natural environment has changed in a relatively short time or when people had to move from one territory to another, which is the case of refugees.
- Secondly cultures may change because of innovations resulting from the creativity and

[6] There is little difference between the two words. Change seems to indicate a difference between two situations within a relatively short time, and may be to a better or a worse situation. Development often is understood as a gradual process to a better situation. We believe that also development may be both in a positive and a negative direction.

ideas of individual members. Such change may occur intendedly and fast as well as unawares and slow.

- Thirdly there may be changes in the cultural configuration as a result of contacts with other cultural groups. This may occur slowly, or rather unawares. For example, the Kapauku in the Central Highlands of West-Irian, used the cowrie shell as their medium of exchange. As the people in the highlands lived quite isolated, the influx of new shells was very sporadic. Each shell, however, was treated and handled so frequently that they got a specific form and shine. During the first half of the century, through expeditions, relatively large quantities of new shells were imported. At first the people noticed the difference between new and old shells. So the import did not effect the value of the *mere*, the old shell. But young ones grow old, and people found new techniques to turn new shells into old looking shells by using newly imported chemicals. As a result, only after a few decades even the experts in the society could not distinguish the newly imported shells from the really old ones. With the effect that the cowry-shell devaluated, and with it the power of the leaders in society (Dubbeldam, 1964). When at that time, in the fifties, new items were introduced that implied a revolution in daily life, such as iron axes to replace the stone axes, and the introduction of paper money, culture and social life reached a critical and revolutionary point.

The other side is when a particular people is violently overrun by another one, such as happened in the conquest of the Americas and Australia, but as well as by comparable migrations, conquests and wars in Africa, Asia and Europe. In such cases the changes can neither be named unaware nor gradual. In the case of physical annihilation of a particular population it is clear that the chances for cultural survival for their culture are very slim. In the case of dispersion of a particular cultural group chances for cultural survival are greater. A question of interest is about the degree in which a culturally foreign power really can change the culture of the population subjected by them.

During the early sixties a team of researchers of Michigan University studied the effects of the modernization process in Uzbekistan. In this case we find a foreign power with a strong ideology ruling a people with a strong religious tradition. Here was a country with an old and imbedded Islamic tradition, which one would expect to provide resistance to modernizing policies. It has some of the largest and most strategic (politically and economically) urban concentrations in Islamic Middle Asia. It possessed the best all-round posture for economic development, including rich delta and valley country for industrial crops, in the whole region. By 1956 the educational institutions of Uzbekistan had produced an intellectual, scientific and

political elite that was numerically significant as compared to other Islamic countries. The non-native element in Uzbekistan's population in 1959 was no more than 19% (the Russians themselves only 13%). Mass education similar to that of industrialized European countries was being practised at all levels of society. National identity and consciousness in the area appeared to be on the increase rather than on the decline. The question was whether this rapid transformation from medievalism just "happened", or was it the result of deliberate policies designed to bring about fundamental changes in Muslim society? (cf. Medlin, 1969, p.120/121).

Decision-making in all areas of society was politicized. Soviet economic policy aimed at resolving the contradiction between rural and urban models of production in order to rationalize and modernize the economy. This policy embraced regional specialization and the creation of nationality areas, but within the framework of a total Soviet economy. To conduct the economic and educational policies on a mass scale required extensive participation of the indigenous population in political processes and administration. This implied a native or local nationality consciousness, that was distinct in Central Asia from the non-native, or Russian nationality. The evidence suggested that there was a viable cultural identity, especially in Uzbekistan, that ran parallel to the Russian element and that related in certain ways to distinctly Uzbek political institutions (op.cit.p.125).

Education and youth organisations played an important role. The 'golden thread" running through the entire Soviet effort at educational reconstruction since 1917 has been the attempt to make learning of practical value, to fashion the school as a gateway to the world of economic specialization and material production. Teachers were asked to relate schooling to work experiences. They were expected to inculcate ideological loyalty and Soviet patriotism. Schools would also serve as community centres to promote adult literacy and cultural programs. They were to emphasize a materialistic and scientific curriculum, aimed at providing manpower resources (op.cit.p.127/128). The Soviet modernizers established policies that both built upon older practices and legitimized new functions of the school in Uzbekistan. In the Soviet native school, similar teaching functions were maintained as in the past, but the content and methods of the roles themselves had been altered somewhat. The same authoritarian relationship between teacher and pupil was expected in the Soviet classroom as in the maktab (op cit. p.131). That the national language was used certainly played an important role, since it enabled the teachers to make references to aspects of cultural identity. By using the native language a teacher can refer to basic concepts with the traditional connotations and framework of thoughts. The research indicated that readers used in school showed a relatively high content of items which supported and reinforced native identities,

which the skilled teacher could use at advantage.

In a paper based on the original research report (cf. Medlin, e.a. 1971, p.230-233) the authors tried to make a few predictions. The continuous emphasis on educational opportunities could lead to a modification of communist ideology. They expected a continued rise of meritocracy based on educational achievement, an increased manifestation of leadership among native Uzbeks and an increased stratification of the social order based on educational criteria. Maybe in the same line of thinking is a rise in disaffection and independent attitudes toward Russian domination. For a society in which some social groups shared a strong cultural heritage of many centuries can hardly accept radically new policies imposed by foreign invaders without generating some feelings and patterns of behaviour that tend to alienate it from the newly dominant system. Interesting are their observations on the influence of voluntary ethnic groups in the streets, restaurants and places of entertainment and urban segregation in housing. Elementary textbooks, radio programmes produced in the Uzbek language and in cultural manifestations (e.g. national dress) showed a considerable recognition of many traditional customs. Finally they expected a rise in national consciousness and assertiveness.

7. Education

Education is the process through which a newborn individual becomes an integrated member of his or her community and it is the main agent of transfer of a culture through the generations. It guarantees the continuation of a culture. At the same time, by stimulating and developing intellect and creativity, education promotes the development of culture that may lead to change (Dubbeldam, 1990:2, p.106).

Through education, the members of a society acquire the factual knowledge, normative systems and analytical framework which they need in order to live in their particular society. Human beings have become increasingly dependent on learning. They have to learn a variety of things, such as:

- adequate reactions to their natural environment, to master particular aspects of it, skills to use particular materials;
- to behave as members of their community in various circumstances;
- the general and specific intellectual and physical skills needed for particular activities; and
- appropriate understanding of the natural and supranatural phenomena, laws and powers basic to existence.

Where culture is a configuration of particular elements, education, that can be considered as

the main agent of culture and reflects culture, is basically an integrated whole as well, at least in theory. The physical, intellectual and ethical integration of the individual into a complete man is a broad definition of the fundamental aim for education (Faure, 1972, p.156).

Education, consequently, has a wide variety of forms, contents and methods. Through *informal education* people learn from others, in personal contacts, ad hoc and the content is determined by the situation of the moment. There is no end to this type of learning. It may last through a person's life. It is perhaps the most integral type of learning. Maybe this is its strength in the formation of personalities and in the transfer of culture. At a time, different for various societies, there rose a need for more organized and specialized forms of education. The school came into being, groups of children that are being taught by professional teachers, who were supposed to teach their pupils specific skills. Originally the emphasis was likely on religious, philosophical or vocational education, but gradually it moved into more secular, basic skills, such as reading, writing, arithmetics and other academic subjects. This led to what we name now *formal education*. National systems of educational institutions, with a fixed curriculum, professional teachers, offered to children and youth, in special buildings. The curriculum is usually determined by a national authority and uniform for the nation. Its strength can be that it may offer a variety of subjects in an integrated curriculum to its pupils. There are, however, many critical notes as to the objectives, relevance, quality and effectiveness. Maybe, at least partly, as an alternative for this formal type of education all kinds of *non-formal education* programmes have come into being. These are still organized forms of education, that have specific objectives, but are more geared to the needs and expectations of the learners. The subjects taught may be specific vocational or professional skills, but also other social, cultural or recreational subjects.

Such a distinction is never absolute, as practice shows that there is quite some overlap. For example, teachers have to implement the curriculum prescribed by the authorities. Their degrees of freedom to teach something else than what is prescribed are limited. One reason being the examinations. At the end of a fixed time the teacher must have completed a number of subjects. If he or she does not reach that target, negative results will fire back to the teacher. Especially in countries where appropriate diploma's are a requirement to get a particular job, the atmosphere in the schools is dominated by what has been labelled the "diploma disease". This prevents the school to deal with themes of local interest. To insert subjects that have a local relevance, either in the classroom or after-during school hours. However, even though there is little room for teachers to insert additional subjects into the curriculum, they still have ample opportunities to insert their views, values, criticism on social or political events. Teachers have day-to-day contacts with the students. During the lessons

they may through intonation or, through little remarks express their views. In the contacts with students outside the classroom they may find opportunities to air their ideas, and communicate with the learners. This is an example of informal education in the formal education system. The study of Medlin, dealt with before, showed that the teachers can still use the prescribed curriculum at their, cultural, advantage. Also the way a teacher functions in the classroom, whether he or she stimulates a critical attitude with the children or not, are important for the overall education of the children. But there are limitations to this as well. When children report at home what the teacher has told them in school and when this conflicts with what the parents expect of the teacher's norms, believes and attitudes, the teacher may get into conflict with the parents and the community, if not the authorities.

There is a never ending discussion on what school education should offer. Many scholars agree that it should build a complete personality. Politicians want the school to teach along their lines of thinking and ideology. Parents want their children to get something useful for a further career, to become decent citizens or just to be happy. The question of what "basic education" means confuses not only educationists but also politicians.

At present schoolsystems in the world seem to develop along uniform lines. It is stated that this is "western" education[7]. In terms of format or organisation, maybe, but there is no such thing as "western" education in terms of objectives and pedagogical ideas and techniques. Furthermore, there has always been a debate about the objectives, the methodology and the content of education. The discussion may get out of tune if undertaken from the point of view of religion or ideology. The result may be that the discussion is not so much about the technical aspects of, for example, the methodology as well as on ideological, religious, or other principles. For example, one reads that "the Western system of education considers the child 'as an object undergoing a treatment and not as an active learner' (cf. Syed Altaf Gauhar, p.75/76). Many educationists will strongly disagree with this statement, since for decades many pedagogues and educationists in the "West" have been seeking for methodologies to stimulate active participation of the learners. In many cases their ideas have been implemented in various degrees. The argumentation used seems to be more an attack on the evaluation and examination procedures that have raised "a rigid class structure that have

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[7] One should be careful in using the term "western", especially in relation to education. If one looks at the education systems in the "western" countries, such as in Europe, North America or Australia one finds fundamental differences. Maybe not in the format, but especially in the objectives, the teaching methods, the style, the subjects taught and the examinations. True, many educationists and pedagogues who influenced the development of the school internationally during the past century lived in those countries, but on the other hand they have absorbed many cultural elements from other societies.

made people subservient to numbers". The author attacks the importance attached to the examination marks, the subsequent ranking of pupils and its consequences for further studies or employment, which is a point for discussion indeed. The further questions raise some problems. They are put up not from an educational point of view but from a religious, ideological or maybe ethical point of view: "What do the Western modes of examinations aim at judging? Since the system has no clear goal, an assessment is made of a student's capability to (1) observe, (2) raise questions, (3) explore, (4) solve problems, (5) interpret findings, (6) communicate verbally, (7) communicate non-verbally, (8) apply learning. All these are given certain numbers and each number is kept in an isolated cell - the total personality of the student is taken as an aggregate of these numbers. There is nothing in the system to enable a teacher to find out whether a student who may have collected the highest aggregate will behave honestly or dishonestly, fairly or unfairly, justly or unjustly, kindly or unkindly towards others." The points mentioned are indeed aspects taken into account during examinations. They are so because they are vital elements in the didactics that want to prevent children to "become objects undergoing a treatment".
If one considers education as a life-long learning process, and if one wants to promote that learners use the various educational opportunities, such as the school, the media, the people from the community, then the points listed above are useful instruments for learning.

A further point for discussion is the question whether, and to what extent, subjects should be taught other than arithmetics, languages, history, geography, sciences, biology and arts. The assumption being that school education should contribute to the formation of a complete personality. What about religion or ideology, as a separate subject or as part of social sciences or philosophy?
The answer lies partly in the conceived complementarity of school education and other types of education, socialization, informal and non-formal education and the media. If (school)education is an integral part of a particular culture, there is no need to force into the school curriculum all kinds of things that could, even better, be dealt with through any of the other means. For example, honesty should be taught to children long before they enter the school system and it will be measured and dealt with by the members of the community in various ways. Part of this is that teachers and peers will react to dishonesty by one of the pupils, even though it is not a subject in the curriculum. It belongs to the realm of informal education as a built-in element in the formal education system.

Teaching of values, be it religious or ideological, in education usually raises a lively

discussion. The first question is, whose values? Those of the authorities, the teachers, the learners, their parents or others in the community? One must admit that no teaching-learning situation is without any values. If not in the subject matter, than in the presentation or the informal sphere of communication between teachers and learners. Yet there are differences in the objectives and the way values are made part of the curriculum.

Much of the discussion concerns religious education. The argument for religious education as a fundament for the curriculum, all elements of which have to be related to it, is that education is an essential and integral element of culture. Therefore its content should match the most valued aspects of culture. If these are determined by religion and the values and social behaviour derived from it, than this should be reflected in the teaching/learning situation. It is considered essential in developing society and in maintaining its identity, keeping out alien ideas and elements that might move it into a wrong direction.

The arguments against religious education are that it indoctrinates the pupils, that it suppresses the intellectual, critical and social development of the learners. Besides, it promotes social segregation, since it stresses the core values of a dominating group against all others.

Religious education is found usually in countries where one finds one dominant religion. It is then often made an integral part of the curriculum. Most teachers will belong to that particular religion. If, however, there are in the country people belonging to other religions, it may have a negative effect on the access to school education, since either pupils may be denied access, or they may refuse to enrol.

In few societies religion(s) are taught as a subject, explaining a number of religions to the pupils in order to promote their understanding of other people in their own country or elsewhere in the world.

A serious problem is that people with a strong value system and consequently a strong feeling of cultural identity, belonging to a particular religion, ideology or ethnic community tend to ignore or reject the ideas and believes of others categorically, without any efforts to understand the "others". Arguments against the others or pro the own group are more often than not based on cultural beliefs rather than on rational arguments. The issue becomes even more complicated when arguments derived from basic cultural values are used in economic debates.

Discussions on education are often based on value systems, religious or ideological doctrines, and too little on what the learners need for now and the future. For example in a discussion on the influence of education on society Basheer El Tom (p.31) writes: "That Mannheim should refuse the tenets of Christianity as the ideological basis of the reformed West is not

indefensible; for the Christian article of faith is both obscure and unsound. Despite repeated attempts at reformation the Christian religion has become somewhat obscurantist and esoteric, and therefore incapable of impinging on society as an educative social force. It has become static, and therefore, lost relevance to a changing and progressive environment".

There is a multitude of examples in which people have denoted others, with different believes, as pagans or heathens, ignoring their believes or condemning them. History shows that many people have been socially rejected and even physically eliminated because of different religious believes. In this way many valuable cultural concepts and ideas, and educational methods and processes have been destroyed or at least have been ignored so that they could not contribute to the development of the people concerned or to the international body of knowledge and ideas. Much of what is called indigenous knowledge and education, is as a consequence unknown to the wider community. Only recently growing attention is paid to this type of knowledge and wisdom, from the point of view of its usefulness, out of respect or because of scientific interest.[8]

Better insight in the indigenous learning systems of (sub-)cultures may help formulating educational programmes for such groups of people, which is especially important if for one reason or the other they have no access to the national formal educational system. It does also help in understanding the way children and adults learn so that the methods used in the classrooms may take this into account. Specific programmes may help to bridge the gap between the culture of the school and the culture of the people and in this way contribute to their cultural development.

8. Decentralizing formal education

Issues related to the concepts of sub-cultures, cultural identity and the curriculum of school education closely coincide with the discussion of centralizing or decentralizing the education system.

Formal education, a teaching - learning situation organized for a specific theme and purpose has a very long history. One may assume that there came a moment in time that parents could not anymore take care of the education of their children in all aspects of life. Some intellectual or manual skills then were taught to a group of children by a professional teacher. As long as the teachers were nominated and supported by the community, the people could have a say in the organisation and in the curriculum. In other cases, however, the programme was

[8] Cf. for example the publications by Luis Rojes Aspiazu (1980), Dr. Gershom N. Amayo (1984) and Dr. A.Kater e.a.(1988).

organized by a sponsor or by an organization. In all cases the teaching-learning process was initially a "sub-cultural" affair. But in the course of time education floated gradually away from the influence of the local community and was formalized.

Box 1.

Chinua Achebe (1964, pp.55-56) makes his leading character in one of his novels, a chief priest of a Nigerian village, say to one of his sons whom he is sending to a nearby school:
'I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eye there. If there is nothing in it you will come back. But if there is something there you will bring home my share'. And in defending his decision to send one son to school the father told the mother: '...Do you not know that in a great man's household there must be people who follow all kinds of strange ways? ... In such a place, whatever music you beat on your drum there is somebody who can dance to it.'

Mass expansion of school education started towards the end of the nineteenth century, almost at the same time when in Europe the nation states were formed. School education became one of the responsibilities of the state.

The assumption was that there was in each state a national culture, even though reality was that many of the states were agglomerations of ethnic entities with their own cultures. In some cases there were wide differences between these component cultures.

As central governments managed the school system, the curriculum was prescribed by the authorities in the capital. The curriculum reflected the culture of the centre. The content served the needs of the ruling groups. The national language was imposed as the language of instruction. Local communities had little say in the curriculum. In some countries religious or philosophical organisations were permitted to run schools within the framework of regulations set by the central authorities. Day to day teaching was strictly prescribed, there was little or no room to include subjects that would answer the needs of the local community. Teachers had little room to bring in any extras in terms of subject-matter or ideas. At the end of the prescribed number of years an examination followed that led to a diploma or an entrance examination to the next level of school education.

In many colonies school education was first introduced by private, foreign, religious organisations. Colonial governments often followed much later. Gradually, however, the curriculum became regulated by the central, colonial governments, even though day to day management was still in the hands of the private organisations. Usually the local community had no influence in school affairs. The only choice people sometimes had was whether to enrol their children or not. The system and the curriculum were mostly copies from those in

the home countries of the colonial governments. In some cases efforts were made to include subjects that seemed in the eyes of the education officials more relevant to the local people. This sometimes met with resistance from the local people, the parents, because they feared that the adjusted curriculum would not lead the children to secondary school or higher levels. Many felt that the time spent on such extra subjects, for example agriculture or handicrafts, was at the expense of the time needed for the "basics", especially reading, writing, arithmetics and the "national" language. After independence the formal school systems were continued, even though in some countries efforts were made to nationalize the schools and the curriculum. New jobs, especially in the government administration, paid salaries that enabled people in such positions to live in a seemingly luxurious situation and offered prestige. Life in the capital seemed attractive. Soon the number of vacancies was saturated and the problem of unemployed school leavers became of growing concern to the authorities. It was nevertheless next to impossible to stop migration to the cities. Here new urban sub-cultures came into existence and the education systems reflected more the needs of the urban sub-culture than those of the people in the rural areas. The goal was to attain the highest possible diploma that would lead to a paid job and if possible to continued education in the country of the former colonial power. The language of the former colonial power remained the language of instruction and the schoolbooks referred to a foreign culture rather than to the own national or local cultures.

With declining economies, growing unemployment, decreasing quality of school education and a high population growth rate less and less youth could find gainful employment in the cities. More and more people in rural areas and groups with a sub-culture different from the one of the ruling group started to question the usefulness of the school education offered and lately, in some places, school enrolments tend to decrease. Here again the school did not meet the needs of local subcultures, while the schoolleavers could not find a place in the "modern" urban sub-culture. This situation still persists the world over.

In many urban centres one finds people, of whom one might say that they belong to the new national culture. Their relations with their original ethnic groups have slackened or became non-existent. They identify themselves with the national culture. They speak the national language(s). Usually they have completed higher levels of school education. The question is, however, to what extent school education has contributed to their cultural change. Because there might have been other factors, as mixed marriages, long stay abroad, broken relations with relatives or individual characteristics.

Recently the discussion on decentralizing education intensified. Partly the reason is that central governments are not able to provide universal education for lack of finance and

Box 2.

The process and all the social, financial and psychological problems individuals experienced have been described in many novels and stories, especially in Africa. For example a quote from *Leopard in a cage* by Jacqueline Pierce (1976: 2-3):

'Are your roots so bad that you want to escape them?'
'I simply want to rise above the filth here.'
'What's wrong with progress, Uncle Nan?' Marangu joined in the conversation. 'She's simply talking about the progress. Look at Walter Mtey. He was the first student from Lomo to study at the University. If he had come back here to live and work, people would have been disappointed.'.....
'.....The people here like to read about Walter in the newspapers - see his picture from time to time. Then they sit back contentedly and say "That's our boy. He's from Lomo. They don't care about his skills. They just know that he's their big man in the town'.
'That's foolish.'
'Why is it foolish? When I finish my studies I'll never come back except to visit from time to time. Think of all your classmates. You were the only one to get a chance to study in America. Yet you're the only one without a car, without a house, without even a job. And why? Because you wanted to come back to Lomo.'

because of organisational difficulties. One looks for resources in the local communities that might contribu.., financially, by voluntary labour, in kind or through the specific expertise of individuals. Cultural factors do not figure prominently on the scene. One may question whether it may be possible to recruit new resources at the community level. In many areas, however, especially those in which educational facilities are weak or absent, the people are too poor to contribute financially or in kind.

Before one can decide on a suitable decentralized delivery system and the resources to be mobilized it is essential that there is a minimum of consensus about the nature and content of basic education. In public discussions and statements it is usually recognized that basic learning needs differ per society. Consequently it seems logical that the basic education offered shows a degree of variety. But is school education allowed to? Education, maybe because of its assumed influence on culture, therefore potentially on all aspects of society, including power, is politically highly sensitive. Most politicians, in the centre, think of education as belonging to the realm of the nation rather than of the (local) community. In order to come to a consensus on the nature and content of basic education in a decentralized system not only a recognition and tolerance of cultural diversity is needed; also a specific look at the concept of 'empowerment', since this concept is often misused by speakers meaning power for a particular group as envisaged by outsiders, rather than self-determination by a community striving for improvement of their daily lives. If one wants to mobilize local resources, one must ensure that 'empowerment' is seen through the eyes of the people in the community, who must be motivated by the fact that the school and other forms of basic

education in their midst are theirs.[9]

One example of an effort to build up a system that the people concerned might feel "as theirs" was an experiment with developing an educational model for the benefit of the indian population in the Territorios Nationales of Colombia, started in 1978, in a project of cooperation between the governments of the Netherlands and Colombia. In the philosophical and methodological starting points of the project the cultural identity of the target group took a central place (Oltheten et.al., in Epskamp 1984; see also L. Alberto Alfonso, 1988). The concept of cultural identity formed the basis of a plan to design an educational model that would meet the needs of various groups and would be adaptable to their socio-economic and cultural conditions. Within the new educational policy, the first gain was that education was considered to be of social value, an essential element of the population's welfare and no longer a means to attain it. This implied that, within the social policy, the population's welfare was to be regarded as the driving force rather than the outcome of economic growth. Education is recognized as a permanent process that is not restricted to school or to the so-called school age. It is intended for all groups, and 'students' should be accepted as they are, without being compelled to a uniform learning process that is similar to a school or is incorporated into a school. Essential was to find a way by which to adjust the educational system to the social system, i.e. to the actual needs of the population. The same holds for the population's active participation in defining educational needs and in finding the right answers. The elements of the educational process were determined on the basis of local worskhops, organized by the people with the assistance of project staff. The main objective of these workshops was to initiate a process of participatory exploration of their own reality. Within the exploration process, which in itself may be regarded as a learning method, cultural reality has an essential place. Various questions are raised with respect to origin, religion and kinship, to the production and significance of particular objects, principal historical events and processes, etc. Older people in the community were identified as resource persons: it was they who had the old skills and knowledge, who possessed the knowledge of medicinal herbs and who knew recent history, marked by the contacts with immigrants. In short, they were the ones who had knowledge of the natural and social environment.

The contents of the model were therefore concerned with:

- knowledge and understanding of the physical and ecological environment;

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[9] Cf. Dubbeldam, Boeren & Hoppers, 1990, p.4.

- insight into the social structure and the social and cultural development;
- the acquisition of conceptual and technical skills and capabilities in order to understand and to control their particular reality.

The community, in its first and permanent phase of participatory research, should not only join in collecting information, but also in its processing, analysis and interpretation. In the consecutive phases of decision-making, or making or rejecting options and their implicit consequences, the community must indicate priorities and select the means and instruments.

As a consequence of the participatory method, teaching aids and other materials have to be created on the basis of factors of the physical and social environment which are related to the language and way of thinking of the target group. The scattered settlements of the population in the project area and the inadequate methods of communication and infrastructure entailed that use of the so-called little media was of primary significance. It was also of vital importance that the villagers took an active part in creating written, graphic, plastic and audio-visual materials. Students of a local teacher training centre were enabled to follow a special programme so that they could participate in the project.

The strength of this project was that it took the cultural identity of the people and a continuous participation as its pivot. Furthermore that materials and methods suited various types of basic education, for children and for adults, including literacy. Initially it was supported by the central authorities. Its weakness was that at a certain stage, when it appeared that it strengthened the cultural identity and awareness of the population regarding their position in relation to the government and the Church, it met with political opposition from the authorities, so that the programme had to be terminated.[10]

In the example given above the experiment aimed at developing an educational model parallel to the national system. Material from the local (sub-)culture was used for the curriculum and the teaching methodology. It was hoped that basic skills could be learned by the people, both youth and adults. Their own culture was to be strengthened so that the people would get a stronger position in the national context.

In other places experiments are within the system. The major aim is to use the local (sub)-culture and expertise (both technical and social skills) in the design of the curriculum of the school or for teaching and management purposes. An example was the experiment SEAMEO undertook in the 1970s and 1980s. The experiment was carried out in Indonesia under the

[10] Cf. Oltheten et al., in Epskamp 1984 and L.Alberto Alfonso, 1988.

acronym PAMONG and in The Philippines it was named IMPACT.[11] The general objective of the project was to develop an effective and economical delivery system for mass primary education. It was essentially an experiment on a management system to see if primary school objectives can be achieved through non-conventional modes, making effective use of available conventional forms of primary education.

In the lower levels IMPACT used the native language, only later the national language(s). The IMPACT teacher, called Instructional supervisor was assisted by itinerant teachers, aides (non-professionals for the routine activities of the school, tutors - volunteers (usually high school students), programmed teachers and last but not least parents and community as resource persons. This type of programme also anchors the school in the local culture through the involvement of local resources. By stimulating cultural awareness the school may also enhance development of the local culture in a more harmonious way.

Other experiments are aimed at the adult population, at improving technical, academic of social skills. "Empowerment" is an essential element in the objectives of many. Literacy is an element in quite a few programmes for adults. An example is the Project Delsilife,[12] which was undertaken at a time when there was a growing worldwide realization that the benefits supposed to have been delivered by the schools had not really reached those that needed them most - people in the depressed areas who constitute the majority of the population in most of the South-East Asian countries. It focused on people's development. The active participation of the people in decision-making, in needs or problem identification, in planning, implementation and evaluation of learning programmes is an integral part of the method. The educative process aims at developing awareness of the needs and problems of the community. It seeks to raise the consciousness of the people about the quality of their lives. It means to sharpen their intellectual abilities and skills to change their environment. It aims at enabling the people to make proper choices of actions to improve their quality of life through self-reliance.

In the examples given the projects do not aim at teaching particular (vocational or technical) skills. Most, if not all, attention is directed at the improvement of life skills, learning

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[11] IMPACT: Instructional Management by Parents, Community and Teachers;
PAMONG: Pendidikan Anak Oleh Masyarakat Orangtua dan Guru. Cf. Socrates, 1986.

[12] The full title of the project is 'Development of a Coordinated Educational Intervention System for the Improvement of the Quality of Life of the Rural Poor Through Self-Reliance'. Four countries, The Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia participated in the project. It was implemented in the three first named countries (cf. Socrates, 1990).

techniques, decision making, awareness and self-confidence.

9. Education and Culture

Already in the sixties the question whether, and to what extent, education influences culture was subject of research. For example studies at Harvard University researched the question whether education makes men "modern" (Inkeles, 1969 and 1975). Their answer to the question was not an unqualified 'yes': "Education is the most powerful factor in making man modern, but occupational experience in large-scale organisations, and especially in factory work, makes a significant contribution in 'schooling' men in modern attitudes and in teaching them to act like modern man" (Inkeles, 1969, p.208). One conclusion is that if attending school brings about substantial changes in fundamental personal orientations, the school must be teaching a good deal more than is apparent in its syllabus on reading, writing, arithmetic and even geography (op.cit. p.213). "Even though we can establish that both the length of schooling and the quality of the school are important in shaping the modernity of the child, we must nevertheless acknowledge that these factors explain only part of the variation in individual modernity scores among young people. Obviously much depends on personal influences which are, to some degree, quite independent of the effects of schooling *per se*. Notable among these personal influences are the characteristics of the child's parents and his school peers (Inkeles, 1974, p.2).

The research took place in a period when development was seen as a process of "modernization", of change much along the lines of development in the North-Atlantic capitalistic world of the time. Furthermore much attention was given to formal education, but too little to the wide variety of non-formal and informal learning networks, both outside and inside the school.

Schools always operate in societies that are in a process of development, whether slow or fast. Through formal education pupils learn new knowledge and skills. Part of this can be applied in life. If not, learning opportunities in the community other than through the school are lost. These new skills, leading to new opportunities, but also to disappointments, together with other developments in society, lead to changes in daily life. In principle the new knowledge and skills give the children access to wider communication circles. The two, changes in daily life in society and exposure to information from wider cultural circles may lead to new ideas, enhance adaptation to the changed environment and stimulate creativity leading to further innovations. Which in turn may cause further changes in cultural elements, that generate new learning needs that have to be inserted in the school curriculum. During the whole process,

however, the children, youth and adults, participate in numerous informal learning situations. Important in this respect is the work situation, but others like social groups may as well be of great influence on personal development. What is learned in the formal setting of the school, may be strengthened or weakened by the content of the informal learning processes. It seems, therefore that the contribution of education to culture will be the strongest and most effective if the two are mutually reinforcing.

10. Conclusions

In the vast changing world of today people are increasingly aware of their culture. In recent political developments cultural aspects play more and more a dominant role. Though economic issues and interests still tend to dominate the balance of power internationally and economic development does effect culture, other issues like cultural identity are coming more visibly into the arena. Values, either derived from ideological origins, from religion or from other views on existence, play (again) a political role. In this respect developments in, for example, Uzbekistan, seem to suggest that during the past decades formal education influenced aspects like work, through vocational skills, rather than social life and religion through the values of the "system" .

On the one hand such ideas, norms and values stimulate the cultural assertiveness of the people and they strengthen their cultural identity. On the other the effect is that mankind may be more and more divided again in a multitude of controversial groups. A process that might lead to sharp contrasts and serious conflicts.

The role school education can play in this respect is limited. It equips the children and youth with particular skills that may help them to survive in society and develop themselves. One may question whether in the past too much emphasis has been laid on academic and vocational skills while social skills and value education have been neglected. Fact is that school education has effectuated changes in terms of individual and societal cultural development. Often it changed, rather than developed indigenous cultures.

However, school education meets, increasingly, with financial problems. If the target of Education for All is to be reached, new resources have to be found. The new trend is to look for new resources at the community level through decentralisation of the education system.

School education can be a useful instrument in the process if it does not only teach its pupils specific skills, manual and intellectual, but also makes them aware of their own values while at the same time informing them in a positive and comparative way about the values of other

people. Without making pupils loose their own values, let them understand the values of others, in this way opening the doors for national and international understanding. School education can be functional in this respect only if it is supported by other educational media, by reading materials, radio, television, and by politicians and religious leaders.

Given that governments lack resources, non-formal education programmes may offer an alternative to the school. One may think of training, courses or seminars that may teach groups of learners specific skills for employment or programmes that enable people to develop themselves in social skills and arts. Condition is, however, that sponsors can be found or that the participants are able to contribute themselves to the costs of such courses. As the participants of most of such programmes aim to acquire skills applicable in new situations, for change, non-formal education has a more direct and stronger influence on culture change.

Informal education seems to play the strongest card, at least in terms of costs. Many educational experiments seek for community involvement and support. The advantage is not only to be found in lower expenses, but also in tapping knowledge, skills and ideas that otherwise would be overlooked in the formal education system, which is based on the cultural needs and interests of dominating groups at the national level. In this way relevance of education and cultural development in a particular country may be fed from a wider range of sources.

It appears also that oral communication and personal understanding do continue even under oppressive regimes. These remain important channels of informal education even surviving dominant formal systems.

While at the one side there is a growing interest in informal education at the community and sub-cultural level, international communication in the forms of variation in information through various media and increased mobility of individuals are becoming important instruments of informal education. People meet each other, within wider circles within their own countries and over the national, political and cultural borders, and learn from each other.

Formal education, the school, can influence cultural development. Conditions are that the skills and behaviour taught is applicable in the non-traditional part of daily life and in this way leads via further informal learning to a change of behaviour, attitudes and ideas. It is also important that the teaching in school is supported by the informal education circuits in or out of school. If this not the case the official values and skills taught may come off second best to what the pupils learn in the informal circuits.

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